

“When one door closes, another opens; but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one that has been opened for us.” This quote was an accurate depiction of my outlook towards life. Since young, like any other teens, I had many whopping dreams and aspirations but on the meandering road to my goals, there were also icy blasts and colossal boulders, hindering my path to success. However, being pessimistic and obdurate in nature, I had always plunked myself before the shut door and throw in the towel. It barred me from success and my desires would soon dissolve into thin air. Nevertheless, I had not once mulled over taking up new challenges until one fine day, Jennifer’s words brought home a significant message and I discovered an open door where a fresh set of challenges unfolded.

When I was young, I would grab a packet of crispy chips and sink snugly into the plush deep couch. Then, I would turn on the television and switch to my favourite swimming channel. My eyes would be fixated on the screen as I watched the elegant swimmers donned with a silky outfit like dolphins in water, plunging themselves forward with each refined stroke. I was enthralled. I want to become a swimmer, the world’s best swimmer.

Finally, I took my first step towards my goal when the school made swimming as part of the curriculum. However, upon arrival at the swimming pool, I was petrified. I peered into the water and my heart skipped a beat. Beneath the murky water, lie brown solid prison bars imprinted on the concrete floor which stretched deep down. I backed away hastily as the other students gambolled in the pool. Would I be able to revel in the pool? Scenes of swift swimmers gliding gracefully flashed across my mind, swimming seemed so calm and effortless but would I turn out to be one of them in future? I pondered for a long time.

It was a matter of time before Jennifer realised my fears of entering the pool. She took a pew beside me and got down to my anxieties. Jennifer, being my intimate acquaintance, I decided to tell her the truth and my eagerness and fear to learn swimming. She said, “Learn everything you can, anytime you can, from anyone you can- there will always come a time when you will be grateful you did. Never be afraid to try something new. Remember, amateurs built the ark; professionals built the Titanic. You will not get anywhere near your goals if you do not overcome your fears.”

Without hesitation, Jennifer seized me by my arm and lugged me to the pool. Jennifer assured me, “You can always hold on to the side. You will not sink. It feels like bathing in a huge bath tub.” “Come on, I will help you,” The instructor stretched out his muscular hands and carried me to the water. Everyone cheered for me. My heart palpitated wildly, I flailed my hands frantically and my body went limp. As he placed me in the water, I grasped to the wall tightly for dear life. I managed to get into the pool!

Next, he made me lie on the surface of the water with his arms supporting my weight. Oh no! I am going to leave the wall! The instructor could read my feelings as lines of worry furrowed my forehead. My heart pounded hard and fast as I braced myself for the worst. What if he lets go? I stretched out my trembling hands to hold tightly to the float. "Kick!" I exhausted all my strength to kick as fast as I could. After the coach had released his support, I kicked much harder. Miraculously, I was floating and swimming very fast. I could see the water parting as I swam forward. The water sluiced across my body and for a moment I felt a great sense of achievement. When I reached the other end of the pool, Jennifer reached out her hands to hug me. She exclaimed, "You have overcome your fears! This is a great step towards your goal. Keep it up. You will become a good swimmer one day if you continue to work hard." For that instant, I was touched by her words. My fears that dawned on me did not exist anymore. I wanted to strive on, I wanted to swim!

Opportunities are always round the corner but I had chosen to stand in front of the closed door, where my comfort zone was. I had a goal but I had chosen the wrong door. Jennifer diverted my path towards an open door; to a new opportunity, to a new world of swimming. I am the key to the door, it is my choice to find the opened oneThis I believe.